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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
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SUBJECT: "Gelatin Lift"--Information from the textile specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture.

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When a homemaker shops for a summer rayon dress...she nearly always asks, "Is it washable?" A good many rayon fabrics wash very well, but they may lose some body after a trip through the tub.

If your rayons seem to be getting limp, if they crush too quickly after you've laundered them...you'll be interested in this suggestion from the textile specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture.

They say we can spruce up that limp rayon after it's washed and rinsed by dipping it in a solution of gelatin. Most rayons don't take to starch successfully. But plain granulated gelatin, softened and then dissolved in water, will often give body or filling to the material.

Here's the way to use it. If you want material to be very stiff, you use more gelatin; if the dress is very sheer, you can use less -- but for the average material, about two tablespoonsful of gelatin should turn the trick. Soak the gelatin in about a half cup of cold water to soften it, then dissolve it in boiling water--about two cups should be enough.

So far, this sounds like the steps to making a congealed salad. But from here on out the processes are different. Pour the gelatin solution in a bowl large enough to hold your dress. Add cold water until the solution is lukewarm. Dip the dress in. Squeeze it gently. Then roll it in an absorbent towel until it's dry enough to iron. You can dip several dresses in the same solution.

The whole process, as you can see, is simple. In the place of gelatin, you can use gum arabic if you have it or can get it. The gum arabic is used the same way as the gelatin, except that, because it doesn't stiffen material quite as much as gelatin does, you'll want to use a little less water to make the solution.

Either gelatin or gum arabic, however, will give your summer rayons a lift.

